



MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

by:

The Hon. Jason P. Hayward, JP, MP

Minister of Economy and Labour

Tabling of the Registration (Births and Deaths)

Amendment Act 2026

4 September 2026

Mr. Speaker,

I rise today to table the Registration (Births and Deaths) Amendment Act 2026. This Bill forms part of the Government's ongoing commitment to modernising Bermuda's legislative framework, safeguarding personal information, and strengthening the integrity of the Island's civil registration system. The primary purpose of the Bill is to reduce the risk of identity theft and the misuse of personal information contained within birth records while ensuring that legitimate access to those records is preserved.

Mr. Speaker,

Birth certificates are among the most important identity documents issued by the Government.

They are frequently used to establish identity when applying for passports, driver's licences, financial services, immigration benefits, and a wide range of other official documents and services.

As society becomes increasingly dependent on identity verification, governments around the world must ensure that personal information is protected against misuse, fraud, and other unlawful activities. It is therefore appropriate that Bermuda periodically reviews its legislative framework to ensure that it continues to meet modern standards of privacy, security, and public administration.

Mr. Speaker,

A review conducted by the Registry General identified concerns relating to the unrestricted public availability of certified copies of birth certificates. The National Anti-Money Laundering Committee Working Group also identified this issue as a potential vulnerability that could facilitate identity theft, financial fraud, and other forms of misuse involving personal information.

While Bermuda has long maintained a system that promotes transparency through access to such public records, it is now necessary to ensure that appropriate safeguards exist to protect sensitive personal information from exploitation.

The Bill before this Honourable House seeks to achieve that objective through a measured and proportionate approach. It strikes an appropriate balance between protecting personal information and ensuring that individuals and organisations with a lawful need for access can continue to obtain certified copies when necessary.

Importantly, **Mr. Speaker**, these amendments do not eliminate transparency.

The public inspection of birth registers will remain available in accordance with existing practices, and historical records will continue to become publicly accessible after an appropriate period of time.

The objective is not to restrict legitimate access to information but rather to prevent the misuse of certified identity documents that may be used to facilitate fraud or identity theft.

Mr. Speaker,

In closing, the Government is committed to protecting the integrity of Bermuda's identity management systems and ensuring that personal information is safeguarded from misuse.

The Registration (Births and Deaths) Amendment Act 2026 represents a practical and necessary reform that will strengthen protections against identity theft, enhance public confidence in the administration of civil registration records, and align Bermuda's legislative framework with contemporary standards of privacy and security.

I table the Bill for the consideration of this Honourable House.

Thank you, **Mr. Speaker**.